DOWNROD DISPLAY

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of United States patent application serial number 10/137,665, filed May 2, 2002.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] This invention relates generally to the art of retail displays, and more particularly to a downrod display rack providing a customer-friendly display of various lengths of downrods for suspending ceiling fans.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Overhead ceiling fans are suspended from ceilings or other overhead structures by downrods. Since ceiling heights are not uniform, it is customary for retail establishments catering to home builders and home improvement contractors to stock a large number of different length downrods.

[0004] Typical ceiling fan downrods are relatively long, slender, tubular items which are difficult to display due to the height required to display them properly and their instability when placed upright. If not displayed in an upright position, the items can not be optimally viewed and must be secured to prevent them from rolling. Also, when displayed horizontally, the downrods' narrow profile can interfere with consumers being able to readily identify which product is best suited for their needs and an excessive amount of floor space would be required. If the display area is high off the floor, then consumers may not be able to identify the products or the customer may find it necessary to remove the downrod to identify adaptability. Items such as fan extension downrods can also be difficult to load into and remove from a shelving space, especially if displayed horizontally, due to their length and the potential for rolling.

[0005] There are many variations in the length of downrods which gives rise to the need to display the downrods with distinguishing identification in a manner giving the self service customer access to the downrods in a point of purchase display.

[0006] Prior freestanding displays are inadequate in accommodating differing heights of downrods and take up excessive floor space. There is a need for a point of purchase display which addresses the shortcomings of the prior fan downrod point of purchase displays.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] It is an object of this invention to provide a retail display for substantial quantities of fan downrods of many different lengths in which the downrods are segregated by length. It is a further object of this invention to provide a downrod display in which upstanding downrods are positioned at an angle which supports the downrod, optimizes viewing by customers and facilitates loading and unloading. It is a further object of this invention to provide a display which provides clear identification of the displayed downrods for the convenience of customers and stocking personnel.

[0008] These and other objects are accomplished by a display for displaying self service merchandise in quantity which includes an upright display rack which is made of plastic, wood, wire or other material, and which has adjustable compartments. The display may also include adjustable dividers within the compartments, a point-of-purchase identification channel on the front of the display, and an angled surface in each compartment to tilt merchandise to an optimal angle for improved stability, viewing, loading and unloading of merchandise.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] The invention and prior art is illustrated in the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is an front perspective view of the display in accordance with this invention,

Figure 2 is a side view taken on the line 2-2 in Figure 1 and

Figure 3 is a perspective view of a prior art display for downrods.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0010] In accordance with this invention, a display system for fan downrods is provided which allows for optimal viewing angle, effective product identification and maximum storage capability per unit of floor space. Various other advantages and features will become apparent from the following detailed description with attendant reference to the accompanying drawings.

[0011] Figure 1 illustrates an upright open front display 11 as seen by a potential customer in a self service home improvement store. The top front of the display 11 is designed to accept a sign 13 across its lateral width for general product information for quick customer recognition of the nature of the displayed downrods. The display includes side by side open front modular sections 23, 25, 27 which can be added to or subtracted from as necessary to fit a designated space. The modular sections are joined by lining up the sections next to each other, as at 21. This modularity allows for easy assembly and maximum flexibility with regards to available space as well as accommodating as many products as required. One segment can be used for either different lengths of downrods or related products.

[0012] Within the modular sections 23, 25, 27 are upper product bins or compartments 31, 32, 33 and lower product bins or compartments 34, 36, 37. The compartments 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37 are subdivided by laterally spaced and adjustable dividers 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, respectively which are supported on rods 46, 47, 48, 49, 51,52, respectively. As shown in Figure 2, the rear walls of the compartments 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37 slope back at a ten degree angle from vertical in order to stabilize the downrods, not shown, and to provide an optimal viewing angle for the customers. The substantially upright position of the downrods makes it easy to load and unload

the compartments. The angle also prevents the downrod from tipping forward until an individual product is removed by a customer or by stocking personnel. The dividers allow downrods of the same or similar lengths to segregated by color or other material distinction.

[0013] The front of the compartments 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37 are provided near their bottoms with laterally extending point-of-purchase product identification rails 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67 which accommodates inserts for product identification. The product identification rails 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67 slope rearward in a bottom to rear direction as viewed from the front of the display. Other information can be displayed, such as when a particular product is out-of-stock or a date by which more of the product can be expected. As illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, the compartment 33 for the shortest downrods is placed above the compartment 37 for the longest downrods. The compartment 32 for the next to shortest downrods is placed above the compartment 36 for the next to longest downrods. The compartment 34 is for the third from longest downrods and the compartment 31 above compartment 34 is for displaying the third from shortest downrods.

[0014] As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the identification rails 52, 56 extend laterally and slope rearwardly to facilitate reading by customers. Figure 2 also illustrates the small footprint of the display. In a preferred embodiment, the base of the display 11 is only eighteen inches in front to rear depth. This shallowness provides more floor space for retailers, and when combined with the modular nature of the display 11, gives retailers maximum flexibility in choosing a location for the display. This can translate into greater sales for the products displayed by the invention, as retailers are more likely to utilize this display than the prior art displays.

[0015] This invention provides a novel and advantageous display for fan downrods. As the above description is exemplary in nature, variations will become apparent to those with skill in

the art. Such variations may be embodied within the spirit and scope of this invention as defined by the following appended claims.